

Northeastern Illinois University
NEIU Digital Commons

NEIU Student Research and Creative Activities
Symposium

2021 NEIU Student Research and Creative
Activities Symposium

Apr 23rd, 11:00 AM

Fever Dream

Mackenzie Matthews
Northeastern Illinois University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://neiudc.neiu.edu/srcas>

Matthews, Mackenzie, "Fever Dream" (2021). *NEIU Student Research and Creative Activities Symposium*.
4.
<https://neiudc.neiu.edu/srcas/2021/s12/4>

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by the Conferences and Symposia at NEIU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in NEIU Student Research and Creative Activities Symposium by an authorized administrator of NEIU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact h-owen3@neiu.edu, wallis@neiu.edu.

FEVER DREAM

Mackenzie Matthews, Department of Art & Design, Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, IL
60625

The presentation will be in the form of a twelve minute artist talk discussing my upcoming solo exhibition entitled, *Fever Dream*. *Fever Dream* is a collection of paintings that address the isolating, confining, and suffocating nature of monogamy. Monogamous relationships are highly valued and honored by society through religion and media and additionally, are favored when it comes to the overall structure of life. However, monogamy may feel restricting and not natural as it suppresses human's natural instincts. It characterizes love as being something that one person can share with only one other individual. These suppression of urges and instincts can leave feelings of isolation and confinement. Through the series of work in *Fever Dream*, the paintings will all have the same composition of a room with no seen entrance or exit. The room is meant to symbolize the feelings of isolation, confinement, and entrapment. In each room, there is a woman inside as she is meant to represent one of the partners in a monogamous relationship. Animalistic prints are used as details on the room's rugs, walls, and the subject's clothing as a way to reference feelings of instinct and urge that are suppressed. Symbolic subject matter such as dogs are placed within the pieces because they symbolize chastity and loyalty as well as a cross to symbolize the social constructs that praise monogamy. Finally, bright and bold hues of pink and red are used alongside the subject matter of cupids in order to represent love, which is the reason for monogamous relationships in the first place. The series of eight gouache paintings on paper is presented in a bright, playful, and surrealist style but underneath what seems happy, there is the uncertainty and isolation that comes with monogamy, kind of like a bad dream or a *Fever Dream*.